

# **KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

## **STAFF NOTE**

### **Review Item:**

CATS Transition Issues

### **Applicable Statute or Regulation:**

KRS 158.6453, 703 KAR 5:020

### **History/Background:**

***Existing Policy.*** Over the last year, the Kentucky Board of Education has engaged in much discussion regarding changes to the state assessment program and how the components of the assessment program should be included in school accountability calculations. An important part of this conversation has been how to best link the new and old assessment and accountability programs so that schools and districts may continue their focus on reaching proficiency in 2014.

In November 2006, after consultation with the National Technical Advisory Panel on Assessment and Accountability (NTAPAA), staff introduced proposed revisions to 703 KAR 5:060. This regulation was originally promulgated in 1998 to establish an interim accountability model to link Kentucky's assessment systems after significant change occurred during the move from the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS) to the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS). The revisions to the regulation proposed in November allowed for a similar statistical or regression model to link the assessment and accountability system ending in 2006 with the new system beginning in 2007. The proposed revisions would have established predicted or expected accountability growth indices for the biennium ending in the 2007-2008 school year.

After introduction of proposed revisions in November 2006, NTAPAA requested additional time to allow for further analysis of changes and development of a linking plan. In December, therefore, staff recommended that 703 KAR 5:060 be removed from the regulatory revision process.

In February and March, as NTAPAA reviewed the changes that have been made in the Kentucky assessment and accountability systems, the panel concluded that the differences between the new and the old assessments are substantial enough to preclude a successful equating of the new assessment scale to the old scale. Equating, in its most rigid application, requires that two tests have the same test specifications (blueprint) and the same statistical characteristics. This is not the case with respect to the Kentucky's old and new Kentucky Core Content Test. Since members recognize, however, that there are a number of reasons why it is desirable to make comparisons between results of the old and new assessments (tracking trends, and identifying schools that have or have

not met state and federal accountability targets), they considered several other options for linking new and old assessment and accountability systems.

NTAPPA considered several options, but two approaches to linking were given primary consideration. One is the use of a regression approach similar to the one that was used for the last major revision of the assessment and accountability system, and the other is the construction of concordance tables. Concordance tables relate performance on different tests of the same general content using the equipercentile method. For example, the SAT and ACT tests used for college admissions have been linked using this method.

With either the concordance table or the regression approach one must assume some level of growth statewide from the last year of the old system to the first year of the new system. Changes in individual school achievement that were either smaller or larger than the overall statewide difference would still be observable.

NTAPPA recommends that the concordance table approach be used to link the old and new systems. In applying this approach, concordance tables would be developed for the indexes at the school level. The term “concordance” is used instead of “equating” to make it clear that the scores should not be considered strictly equivalent but rather should be considered as generally comparable.

After reviewing Kentucky’s growth in performance from 1999, the panel recommended that a set amount of growth from 2006 to 2007 be assumed based on the growth trend observed from 1999 through 2006. Concordance tables would be developed for each school level (elementary, middle and high).

To provide a deeper explanation of the concordance approach, Attachment A is provided. This recent publication of the College Board describes in some detail the equipercentile concordance linking approach used to relate SAT and ACT scores.

### **Impact on Getting to Proficiency:**

The national experts serving on NTAPAA have offered the best and most reasonable option to move Kentucky through the changes in the assessment and accountability system and keep the focus rightly on the progress toward proficiency.

By establishing a relationship between the new and old systems, the concordance methodology allows school and district baselines for CATS to remain intact. School, district and state performance beginning in 2007 can be related to the baselines and targets found on the current CATS customized growth charts.

In 2007, the first year of the new system, Kentucky educators and others will participate in a standard setting process using the new assessment and student work to establish in new tested grades and reaffirm in existing grades the student performance standards of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished. These new student performance standards and the relationship between the systems established through concordance will

allow schools, districts and the state to use the same metric of the accountability index to evaluate movement toward proficiency and to identify where assistance is needed to reach proficiency by 2014.

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**Deputy Commissioner**

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